



Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) Meeting Summary

Mid-County Regional Services Center, 2424 Reddie Drive, Wheaton, MD

Call to Order:	Greg Intoccia, Chair			Respectfully Submitted by: Oriole Saah, Secretary	
Date/Time:	January 15, 2016; 7:00 PM ET				
Attendees:		Adjogah, Mensah		vacant	X Rowden, David
		Bonilla, Luis	X	Neuringer, Jason	X Saah, Oriole (Secretary)
	X	Intoccia, Gregory (Chair)	X	Newman, Rick	Shoenberg, Robert (Parliamentarian)
		vacant		Vacant	X St. Gerard, Henriot
	X	Lynch, Maisie	X	Romero, Francisco	X Tankersley, Judy
Staff:	Luisa Montero, Director, Mid-County Regional Services Center				
Guests:	Paul Bessel, Chair, Montgomery County Charter Review Commission Chuck Crisistomo, Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security Katherine Mullen, Legislative Director, Senator Manno				

APPROVED

Call to Order and Introductory Remarks: 7:03 PM by Greg Intoccia

Board does not have a quorum so cannot conduct official business.

Introductions

Community Concerns: none raised

Old Business: none raised

Council Updates: none available

Guest Speaker – Paul Bessel, Chair, Montgomery County Charter Review Commission:

Mr. Bessel explained the purpose and general contents of the County Charter. Taxes can be raised by the amount of increase of the CPI (Consumer Price Index). Increases greater than that amount require nine votes (even if there is a vacancy so there are fewer than nine sitting members).

The Charter Review Commission seeks input of groups such as MCCAB and public input. A public hearing will be held January 21 at 7:30 at the County Council Building. Or recommendations can be sent in writing to the Commission prior to the second Wednesday of February (2/9/16). The vote on which changes to propose will be held at that 8:00 AM meeting.



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November 2016 changes go before voters on the ballot. An example of a proposal we may see on the next ballot: Fill vacancy of the County Executive position of less than three years by special election. Currently, vacant Executive vacancy is filled by:

- Election if remaining term exceeds three years
- Appointment by County Council if term is under three years
- Selection by the Central Committee of the party of the elected Executive (so the Democratic Central Committee if Leggett departed before completing his term) if the County Council fails to name someone.

Send written comments to the Charter Revision Commission, c/o County Government, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville. They can also be emailed to charterreview.commission@montgomerycounty.md

There are two ways to change the charter

1. Through commission to get on the ballot
2. Get 10,000 signatures to get on the ballot (examples are Ficker Amendment and the 1968 creation of the position of the County Executive)

Acceptance of Agenda and Minutes

- Motion to accept agenda as amended was approved.
- Motion to accept minutes as amended was approved.

Guest Speaker – Chuck Crisistomo, Office of Emergency Management/Homeland Security:

Began with a weather report: possibly major snow storm expected for coming weekend. OPM makes directives to federal employees to avoid too many workers commuting at the same time and a repeat of the commuter nightmare of January 2011.

Question to residents: can you survive 72 hours in your home with no outside help?

Potomac water treatment can't go without power for more than 15 hours. Two past events, 2010 straight-line storm and 2014 derecho, both pushed limits of this capability. Water is required for survival in our society.

PEPCO reliability has improved since the derecho.



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Business preparedness – are copies of important business documents saved in a safe place, or all at the place of business?

Seniors – enough medications? Copies of important documents?

Agency works to increase County's ability to deal with the type of emergencies experienced in the past or we might experience. Many entities work together:

Utilities

County agencies / regional county centers

MCPS

Red Cross

Faith community groups – very good at providing food and working with Homeland Security to curb violent extremism

National Capital Region – DC & surrounding counties, meet monthly. Highest priority: How do we respond to a complex, coordinated attack? Same structure exists at the state (Maryland) level.

May 2015 Montgomery County was certified for emergency management – a recognition that is usually reserved for state agencies. Only the 12th county of over 300 in the county to earn the recognition. Measures 32 core competencies (only 25 apply to counties).

We do get tornadoes. Also, planners don't allow building in flood plains, preventing a great deal of potential damage.

What would happen if an emergency shut down county government? Building and maintaining a continuity plan. Avoids state or federal control of rebuilding so that communities can rebuild themselves as they want to be.

Shelter plan – currently activated primarily for large apartment fires when more than 25 people or 10 families (Red Cross capacity) are affected.

Open Government – but we need security, as well.

Emergency Ops Plan is the bible for emergency response. Exercises are practices twice each year.

Community CERT (citizen volunteers) is under firefighting. CERT volunteers are heavily training and able to respond in many emergencies.

- Question: events with major impacts on traffic and on disabled citizens are not reported via alerts. Full reporting could help drives avoid impacted areas so as to avoid making situation worse. Examples: 1) closure of east bound Randolph for over eight hours one



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day this past fall. An alert was made initially but there were no alerts that the situation persisted and no alert when it was finally cleared. 2) power outage so traffic never stopped at lights on Georgia in the Shorefield area, making it impossible for a person who is legally blind to cross Georgia and catch a bus to get to a doctor appointment.

- Alerts – follow-up alerts not made (ongoing or clear) except for stoppages of all lanes on State roads for more than 30 minutes. Issues with poor communications with SHA (State Highway Administration). Mr. Crisistomo agreed to attend a future Quality of Live Committee meeting and explore these issues in greater depth.
- Question: who is in charge during an emergency?
 - Ultimately, his agency answers to Executive Leggett. Twenty-six Emergency Managers in Maryland answer to the Maryland Emergency Director. Only the Governor can make emergency declarations in terms of requesting federal/FEMA assistance.
- Homeland type threats?
 - Currently working on preventing work place violence. Existing program needs to be enhanced.
- How should citizens report/reach out for assistance in the event of a major emergency?
 - Police non-emergency. Call 911 if you feel threatened. 311 is a good way to report/request assistance. 311 operates from 7 AM to 7 PM. No budget for 24 hour 311 service. This might be an area MCCAB can get involved.

Director Report

- Weather: boards & commissions follow MCPS/CUPF policy
- June 15 will be the last Taste of Wheaton in this area
- Public hearing on the closure of Hermitage Avenue to be held next week. This is the road between the current library and rec center.
- February 20 Wheaton Library closes. Facility will be vacated by March 21. Still seeking satellite space for limit service.
- Styrofoam ban – business can use existing inventory but cannot buy more.
- Wheaton Regional Library – tentative closing mid to late February. Looking for alternative interim space in Wheaton for satellite services.
 - Will there be a “yard sale” to sell fixtures & materials other than books? Not known.
 - Boiling Brook location of Friends of the Libraries is expanding & a generous donor is providing a storage pod.
 - Twinbrook Library reopens Saturday, January 23 (weather permitting).

Committee Reports

Quality of Life – no regular meeting due to retreat. Asking members with a particular interest to bring a letter about the issue or a particular item that the committee can practically address to the next committee meeting. We will also be addressing Alerts.



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Land Use, Zoning, & Transportation

- Planning speakers on issues developed during the retreat including GOCA, The Attorney representing Glenmont Shopping Center owners, etc.
- Need more information on developments in the North Wheaton area.

Liaison Reports

PEPCO Community Group – no reconvened.

WUDAC

- Walking Tour will be May 7.
- Additional tour of Pembroke area, with focus on affordable housing, February 29
- A&E Re-designation application due April 1, 2016. Discussing the addition of the library/community center to the designated area.

Olney Town Center Advisory Committee – meets January 26

Department of Permitting

- New igCC (international green Construction Code) codes – energy efficiency codes to affect new construction & commercial buildings.
- Concerned about fitting into the new building – more people on staff than allotted space and adding fire inspection group (24 additional people). Is there something MCCAB can do to speak to this need?
- Diane Jones spoke about unpermitted ice rink in Poolesville. County will try to work with building. Presents multiple safety issues.



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New Business

- Question about governing documents for MCCAB. One says that a quorum is nine members and another says that it is a simple majority. Need to resolve this. Can we change/clarify the language? Stated that there is no charter, only a policies and procedures document.
- Currently three vacancies on MCCAB
- GOCA traffic camera force met for a year and made recommendations to Leggett & police will provide monthly reports but speed limit requests were referred to SHA. Are Traffic Camera Force meetings subject to open meetings laws?
- Attempting to hold next meeting in Aspen Hill. Dave Rowan will work on this.
- Retreat – great ideas came out of the retreat. Work can be done in Committees.
- Leggett's Budget Forum is at Queensguard Community Center on January 22.
 - MCCPTA holding a Lobby Day on February 15, President's Day. Busses leaving from all MCPS High Schools at 11:00 AM. Come to Annapolis and lobby on school issues.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn meeting approved at 9:10 pm.